

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 11577 072015Z

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SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR SEMINAR WITH GOV OFFICIALS

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY PROPOSED A SEMINAR ON THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY WITH GOV ECONOMISTS FROM THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS FOR FEBRUARY, 1976, AND REQUESTS CU TO BEGIN RECRUITMENT OF SUITABLE AMSPECS, INCLUDING IF POSSIBLE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FISHLOW OF ARA. END SUMMARY.

2. SEEKING MEANS TO STRENGTHEN BILATERAL DIALOGUE AND MOST EFFECTIVELY UTILIZE CU FUNDS EARMARKED FOR ECONOMIC EXCHANGES (APPROVED PROJECTS WS-3 AND WS-5 IN USIS COUNTRY PLAN). POST OFFICERS HAVE DISCUSSED VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES WITH IMPORTANT GOV ECONOMIC ENTITIES. THE MOST POSITIVE RESPONSE TO OUR SUGGESTIONS HAS COME FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, DR. MANUEL PEREZ GUERRERO.

3. PEREZ GUERRERO HAS SUGGESTED THROUGH A MEMBER OF HIS STAFF THAT ONE OR BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE:

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PAGE 02 CARACA 11577 072015Z

A. INTERNATIONAL COMMODITY TRADE: IT WAS SUGGESTED

THAT AN APPROPRIATE FRAMEWORK FOR SUCH A SEMINAR MIGHT BE AN EXAMINATION OF THE "INTEGRATED APPROACH" TO COMMODITY POLICY, INCLUDING APPROPRIATE ACTION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL. THE SEMINAR MIGHT INCLUDE A REVIEW OF TRADE IN A FEW SELECTED COMMODITIES INCLUDED IN THE UNCTAD LIST OF 10 COMMODITIES;

B. TECHNOLOGY: IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT THIS TOPIC MIGHT INCLUDE AN EXAMINATION OF TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY, DIFUSION OF TECNOLOGY, ADAPTATION OF TECHNOLOGY TO DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS, AND A DISCUSSION OF DECISION 24 OF THE ANDEAN PACT.

4. IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT THE FIRST SEMINAR BE HELD IN CARACAS EARLY IN 1976. THE U.S. WOULD SELECT UP TO THREE HIGHLY QUALIFIED PARTICIPANTS, WHO MIGHT BE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, ACADEMICIANS, OR PRIVATE EXPERTS IN THESE FIELDS. THE GOV WOULD SELECT ITS PARTICIPANTS AND PROVIDE THE MEETING SITE. WHILE NOT EXPLICITLY STATED, THE EMBASSY PRESUMED THAT GOV PARTICIPATION WOULD PROBABLY BE LIMITED TO APPROPRIATE GOV OFFICIALS. THE SEMINARS WOULD BE ORGANIZED INFORMALLY AND WOULD NOT BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC OR TO THE PRESS.

5. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT PRIVATE SEMINARS OF THE TYPE PROPOSED WOULD BE AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF OPENING AN INFORMAL DIALOGUE WITH THE GOV WHICH COULD LEAD TO A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN UNDERSTANDING AND DIALOGUE. ONE OF VENEZUELA'S MOST PERSISTENT COMPLAINTS IS THAT THE U.S. PAYS INSUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO VENEZUELA AND TO LATIN AMERICA. EVEN THOUGH THE TOPICS SELECTED MAY BE CONTROVERSIAL, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT A FRANK, BUT INFORMAL, REVIEW OF SUCH ISSUES COULD CONTRIBUTE TO MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND MIGHT HEAD OFF PUBLIC VENTILATION OF DIFFERENCES WITH THE U.S. WHICH HAVE OCCASIONALLY MARRED OUR RELATIONS.

6. OF THE TWO TOPICS SUGGESTED, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT A SEMINAR ON "TECHNOLOGY" MIGHT BE MORE USEFUL AT THIS TIME AND PLANS TO PROVEED WITH IT AS APPROVED PROJECT WS-5. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 CARACA 11577 072015Z

7. COMMODITY POLICY WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF AN INTENSIVE REVIEW BY ONE OF THE COMMITTEES TO BE ESTABLISHED AT THE PARIS CONFERENCE ON INTERNTIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION. THE "INTEGRATD APPROACH" FAVORED BY VENEZUELA AND OTHER LDCS WILL FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN THE COMMITTEE'S DISCUSSIONS. THERE WILL BE AMPLY OPPORTUNITY FOR BILATERAL EXCHANGES WITH VENEZUELA ON THIS SUBJECT.

8. TECHNOLOGY, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS A SUBJECT WHICH IS POORLY DEFINED IN TERMS OF U.S.-VENEZUELAN RELATIONS. OUR DESIRE TO CREATE CONDITIONS WHICH WILL FACILITATE TECHNOLOGY FLOW IS NOT WELL UNDERSTOOD. THIS TOPIC MIGHT ALSO OFFER A BETTER OPPORTUNITY FOR A MORE BALANCED EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. THE VENEZUELAN SIDE COULD BE EXPECTED TO TAKE THE LEAD IN DISCUSSING THE ANDEAN PACT.

9. THE SUCCESS OF THIS SEMINAR WOULD DEPEND HEAVILY ON THE CALIBER OF THE U.S. PARTICIPANTS. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT A U.S. TEAM SHOULD IDEALLY BE HEADED BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FISHLOW, WHO MIGHT BE ACCOMPANIED BY ONE OR MORE EXPERTS IN THE SUBJECT MATTER. FEBRUARY OF NEXT YEAR JUST BEFORE OR AFTER THE PROJECTED SECOND US-VENEZUELAN SYMPOSIUM (NOW PLANNED FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 16) MIGHT BE THE BEST TARGET DATE.

10. MEANWHILE, THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS WITH PEREZ GUERRERO'S OFFICE TO ARRANGE FOR A SECOND SEMINAR (WS-3) TO BE HELD IN THE UNITED STATES (POSSIBLY ON THE SUBJECT OF INTERNATIONAL COMMODITY TRADE) LATER IN THE FISCAL YEAR FOR A GROUP OF GOV ECONOMIC EXPERTS SELECTED BY THE GOV TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE.

11. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S TAKING ACTION TO RECRUIT THE AMSPECS TO IMPLEMENT PROJECT WS-5 AND TO GIVE US FURTHER CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS TO HELP MAKE THIS FIRST PROJECT BOTH SUBSTANTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL. SHLAUDEMAM

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